

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 PRETOR 06135 141800Z
ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T PRETORIA 6135

EXDIS

FOR ASST SECY MOOSE ONLY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PDEV, SF, US
SUBJECT: JOE RHODES - MULDER CONTACTS

REF: STATE 265865

1. IN A CONVERSATION WITH CONNIE MULDER ON NOVEMBER 11 I RAISED ISSUE OF RHODES CHANNEL AS PER REFTEL. HE WAS ALREADY AWARE THAT I KNEW ABOUT THE CHANNEL BECAUSE ANDY YOUNG BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT WHEN WE SAW MULDER ON AUGUST 29.
2. MULDER RESPONDED THAT THREE WEEKS AGO JOE CALLED HIM AND MENTIONED FOUR SUBJECTS THAT MIGHT BE DISCUSSED. ONE OF THESE WAS ISSUE OF ONE-MAN ONE-VOTE. MULDER SAID HE TOLD JOE THAT IF THIS POINT WERE A CONDITION, THEN THERE WAS NO POINT IN PURSUING FURTHER TALKS. IF HE WANTED TO PROCEED ON THE OTHER THREE, HE WOULD CONTACT HIS SUPERIORS. HE HAS HAD NO FURTHER WORD FROM JOE.

3. I ASKED HIM IF HE COULD TELL ME WHAT THE OTHER POINTS COVERED WERE AND IF I COULD BE OF ASSISTANCE. HE REPLIED THESE HAD TO DO WITH VARIOUS DOMESTIC ISSUES BUT
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THERE WOULD BE NO USE IN GETTING INTO THEM IF AMERICAN POLICY IS TO PRESS FOR ONE-MAN ONE-VOTE. ASSUMING A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING ON THIS ASPECT, HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO MEET WITH ANY AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVE ANYWHERE, SUBJECT, OF COURSE, TO THE AUTHORIZATION OF HIS PRIME MINISTER.

4. I EXPLAINED OUR POLICY AS PRESENTED BY THE VICE PRESIDENT AT VIENNA. THIS TRIGGERED A RESPONSE CLOSELY FOLLOWING THE RATIONALE AND CONCLUSION THAT PIK BOTHA GAVE ME THE DAY BEFORE, I.E. THAT BLACKS ARE DIFFERENT AND POWER SHARING WITH THEM IN ANY FORM IS OUT OF THE QUESTION. MULDER NOTED THAT HE FAVORED PROMPT GEOGRAPHIC REDEFINITION OF HOMELANDS GOING WELL BEYOND THE LAW OF 1936 AND THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE. THIS WOULD LEAVE RSA WITH WHITES IN EXCLUSIVE CONTROL OF THEIR AFFAIRS IN THEIR OWN TERRITORY, WITH INDIAN AND COLOREDS HANDLING MATTERS PERTAINING TO THEIR OWN SITUATION. RSA WOULD BE HAPPY TO USE ITS CAPITAL AND KNOW-HOW TO ASSIST THE STATES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT BUT THERE WOULD BE NO RPT NO JOINT DECISION MAKING OR POWER SHARING. MULDER NOTED THAT CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS IN THE CABINET PREVENTED FASTER MOVEMENT IN THIS DIRECTION.

5. I AM NOT SURE WHERE THIS LEAVES US ON THE RHODES CHANNEL. IN THE AUGUST 26 CONVERSATION ANDY EXPLAINED THAT THE RHODES CHANNEL HAD BEEN USED DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD BECAUSE THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO USE OFFICIAL CHANNELS. MULDER'S RESPONSE TO THIS CLARIFICATION WAS ESSENTIALLY PASSIVE SINCE THERE HAD BEEN NO FOLLOW-UP VIA RHODES OR OTHERWISE WITH HIM, AND THE VIENNA MEETING HAD IN THE MEANTIME TAKEN PLACE. JOE'S RECENT PHONE CALL HAS PROBABLY BEEN INTERPRETED BY
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MULDER AND THE SAG AS AN AUTHORIZED BACK CHANNEL SOUNDING. HENCE MULDER'S RESPONSE THAT HE IS INTERESTED IN TALKS AS LONG AS WE DO NOT IMPOSE CONDITIONS. THIS RAISES THE ISSUE OF WHETHER JOE IS ACTING ON HIS OWN AND HOW HIS CONTACTS ARE READ HERE. I THINK YOU MIGHT WANT TO SORT THIS OUT WITH TONY LAKE AND ANDY YOUNG. IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO KNOW WHAT THE THREE OTHER POINTS JOE PUT TO MULDER ARE AND HOW ALL FOUR WERE COUCHED. YOU AND TONY MAY ALSO WANT TO CHECK WHAT AUTHORITY JOE USES FOR HIS INITIATIVES. I AM NOT ADVERSE TO USE OF BACK CHANNELS WHEN THESE ARE WELL COORDINATED AND HOLD SOME PROMISE OF BEING PRODUCTIVE, BUT THIS SITUATION IS TOO DELICATE FOR FREE-WHEELING.
BOWDLER

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